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Chairman: Mr. KUKAN (Slovakia)

CONTENTS

AGENDA ITEM 111: ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN

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The meeting was called to order at 10.40 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 111: ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN (A/48/3 (chap. VII C), A/48/38, A/48/98, A/48/124-S/25506, A/48/182, A/48/187-E/1993/76, A/48/279, 301, 338, 354, 359, 413 and 513; A/C.3/48/L.5)

1. Ms. MONGELLA (Assistant Secretary-General and Secretary-General of the Fourth World Conference on Women), introducing agenda item 111, said that the Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace, to be held in Beijing in 1995, would take place exactly 10 years after the previous Conference on Women in Nairobi. The dramatic political, economic and social changes which had occurred during the past decade had raised hopes, but had also perhaps reduced the women's chances to enjoy human rights and a better quality of life. Political strife and armed conflicts had resulted in an increased number of displaced persons and refugees, the majority of whom were women and children. Those conflicts had consumed huge amounts of resources desperately needed for development.

2. SInce the First World Conference on Women, held in 1975, the international agenda on women had evolved from a narrow focus on women as social objects to one of equality and, in the 1970s and 1980s, to broader concepts of development. Currently, the gender perspective was being applied to global, regional and national issues. The Fourth World Conference on Women would appraise the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women and formulate a platform for action. The work of the Conference should go beyond the analysis of problems and should focus on feasible, effective and immediate action in order to achieve equality, development and peace.

3. The report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies (A/48/413) contained ideas about possible measures to confront violence. A declaration on the elimination of violence against women (A/C.3/48/L.5) drafted by the Commission on the Status of Women was recommended by the Economic and Social Council for adoption by the General Assembly.

4. The report on the status of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (A/48/354) indicated that the Latin American and Caribbean region had become the first United Nations region to have all its States become party to the Convention. She hoped that by the time the Fourth World Conference was convened, other regions would have done the same.

5. Preparations for the Fourth World Conference had gained momentum at all levels. At the Secretariat level, preparations had continued despite the move of the Division for the Advancement of Women from Vienna to New York and the ongoing restructuring of the United Nations Secretariat in the economic, social and related fields. The Secretariat was paying special attention to the participation of non-governmental organizations as decided by the Commission on the Status of Women. Guidelines would soon be provided for the participation of non-governmental organizations without consultative status in regional preparatory meetings and in the 1995 Conference. Their full participation in the preparatory process at the national, regional and international level was highly desirable.

(Ms. Mongella)

6. National activities were perhaps the most important element in the preparations, since it was at the national level that change was felt in people's lives. The debate on women's issues should be of a truly national nature, involving Governments, non-governmental organizations, women, educational and research institutions, political parties and parliaments. The major task of the regional preparatory conferences would be to articulate the specific needs and priorities of the region. It was essential that all Member States should participate in the preparations so that the World Conference would reflect the ideas, concerns and hopes of the largest possible number of women. The preparations for the Conference should be regarded as a process which offered yet another opportunity for the international community to focus its attention on the critical areas of concern to women.

7. Ms. SHIELDS (Director, International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW)), referring to the report of INSTRAW (A/48/301), said that during the 1992-1993 biennium, the Institute had identified two clusters of programmes: mainstreaming gender in development strategies; and making women visible. Both programme clusters were crucial in the process of empowering women and alleviating poverty. A number of activities had been carried out under the subheading of women, environment and sustainable development. A long-standing activity of INSTRAW had been to provide modular training packages related to women, water supply and sanitation. New sets of modules were currently available in French, and would soon be available in Spanish and Chinese. The modules were being expanded to include a specific section on solid-waste management. INSTRAW was currently involved with other United Nations groups concerned with the coordination of water-resource activities.

8. Substantial progress had been made in the area of making women visible. Such activities as the organization of the first national workshop on statistics and indicators on women in Turkey were geared to improving countries' capacity to produce better and more extensive gender statistics, with particular emphasis on assisting countries in their preparation of country reports for the 1995 Conference. INSTRAW was involved in a long-term research project on the measurement and valuation of unpaid contributions to social and economic development. An essential step towards raising the status of women was to measure and value the work they were already doing. There were many conceptual and methodological problems involved in valuing non-market production and employment; INSTRAW had developed a theoretical framework for that purpose.

9. Another aspect of making women visible was communicating knowledge about women to a wide audience. Recognizing that the mass media frequently failed to meet women's needs, a major study on women and communications funded by the Italian Government had been undertaken by INSTRAW. INSTRAW had extended its dissemination of information through a new report which offered a more detailed view of its activities and it continued to produce a variety of publications, to conduct regular briefings with non-governmental organizations involved in women and development and to strengthen its ties with academic institutions. In its next two years of work, INSTRAW's programme would be more and more directed towards assisting in the preparation of the World Summit for Social Development and the Fourth World Conference on Women, both to be held in 1995.

10. Ms. SOLTAN-MOHAMMADI (Focal Point for Women, Office of Human Resources Management), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on improvement ofthe status of women in the Secretariat (A/48/513), said that the report highlighted both achievements and disappointments in attempting to reach the targets set by the General Assembly. The most notable achievements between July 1992 and June 1993 were the appointment of three women at the Under-Secretary-General level and one at the Assistant Secretary-General level, the increase of women at the D-1 level from 26 to 31 and the promotion of 10 women to the P-5 level, bringing the number of women in posts subject to geographical distribution from 93 to 103. While the overall increase from 30.6 per cent to 31.7 per cent was disappointing, significant progress had been made in increasing the number of women in decision-making posts and building a pool of Professional women officers who could be promoted to the D-1 level and above in the near future.

11. The six tables and annexes in part II of the report detailed the current situation of women in posts subject to geographical distribution. The figures showed that the proportion of women by region of origin continued to be uneven. Africa, the Middle East and Eastern Europe remained under 31 per cent; and 76 Member States had no women representatives at all in such posts. As for promotions in the reporting period, it could be inferred from table 4 that the significant number of promotions to the P-3 and P-4 levels were probably due to changes in the promotion system during the reporting period from the Vacancy Management and Redeployment System to the annual grade-by-grade promotion review of all eligible staff. Effective 1 November 1993, the Secretariat had introduced a revised promotion and placement system that attempted to combine the best features of both systems. As indicated in table 5, women had not fared as well in recruitment during the 12-month period. Not only had it been difficult to implement the special measures for recruitment of women during that period, but it had also proved difficult, given the limited exceptions to the freeze, to enhance the rate of women recruits.

12. Beyond the facts and figures covered in the report, there were still certain basic issues that merited serious consideration in order to achieve the goals of real equality for women in the Secretariat. First, there was a need to reconsider strategies in the light of progress made thus far. Efforts must be intensified to integrate the strategies for enhancing the status of women into the regular recruitment, supervision, review and promotion processes. There was also a need to look into the question of accountability of managers in implementing policies laid down by the General Assembly and the Secretary-General. Delegations might consider recommending that integration of women into the system should become a criterion for performance evaluation and accountability of managers.

13. Second, efforts should be broadened to include not only posts subject to geographical distribution but also other categories of staff such as the language services and the General Service and related categories. Those categories required attention because the former had a ceiling for the advancement of women which should be overcome; and women in the General Service and related categories had been at a particular disadvantage because their only access to Professional posts was the G to P examination.

(Ms. Soltan-Mohammadi)

14. Third, the Secretariat should pursue a better planned and proactive policy seeking qualified women from under- and unrepresented regions and Member States in order to redress the regional imbalances. More interaction with the regional commissions and field offices was necessary to bring in and promote women from all regions. Achievement of that objective required the commitment of Member States as well as the Administration: it was obvious from table 3 that the policies adopted at successive sessions of the General Assembly had to be reflected in the policies and actions of Member States in order to achieve equality for women in the Secretariat.

15. Miss FOSTIER (Belgium), speaking on behalf of the European Union, said that there were still many obstacles to be overcome in achieving the objectives proclaimed in the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women. Since its establishment, the European Union had been committed to ensuring scrupulous respect for the principle of equality of opportunity between women and men. Its member States sought to eliminate discrimination and promote broad participation of the social partners. The new socio-economic situation had led the European Union to consider equal treatment of women and men within a broader political perspective encompassing all social and economic aspects. Laws and action programmes to ensure equality of opportunity had been adopted to integrate women into decision-making. In order to meet the challenges of the 1990s, the Union's third programme of action, covering the period 1991-1995, sought to promote the participation of women and re-evaluate their contribution to economic and social life.

16. The European Union's commitment to the advancement of women had also been demonstrated at the Vienna World Conference on Human Rights, which had given particular attention to the fundamental rights of women and girls. It was hoped that the Commission on the Status of Women would take follow-up measures to implement the Conference's recommendations. The States members of the European Union fully supported the view that those rights should be integrated into United Nations activities in the field of human rights, including the promotion and ratification of all legal instruments concerning women's rights as well as the consideration of reservations expressed.

17. All United Nations bodies should systematically consider questions relating to women's rights and increase their cooperation in that regard. Coordination between the Centre for Human Rights and the Division for the Advancement of Women should be strengthened. The Commission on the Status of Women and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women should consider without delay the possibility of introducing a procedure for receiving individual complaints by drawing up an optional protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

18. The European Union was very concerned about violence against women and would support the adoption of the draft declaration on the elimination of violence against women (A/C.3/48/L.5). For too long, the international community had denied the extent of that phenomenon in public and private life. Governments had a primary responsibility for eliminating all forms of sexual harassment and exploitation of women, prejudice against them in the administration of justice and certain traditional or extremist religious practices which were harmful to their physical or moral integrity. The European

(Miss Fostier, Belgium)

Union would participate in the discussions at the next session of the Commission on Human Rights concerning the possible appointment of a special rapporteur on violence against women, an idea which had also been supported by the World Conference on Human Rights.

19. The 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women would convert its priority themes, "equality, development and peace", into a platform for action to speed up implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies. Resolute national and international action was necessary in order to identify the main obstacles and define specific, achievable and measurable objectives. Like other regions, Europe would prepare carefully for the Conference by convening a regional preparatory meeting before the end of 1994 to consider, inter alia, the role of women in the economy, and, particularly, in transition economies.

20. Both Governments and intergovernmental as well as non-governmental organizations had a role to play in promoting awareness of questions concerning the advancement of women. As in the case of other international conferences, non-governmental organizations should be closely associated in the work of the 1995 Conference through a parallel forum. The European Union noted with satisfaction that the host Government was willing to admit all non-governmental organizations and individuals wishing to participate in the NGO Forum. In view of their important role, the media should also fully participate in the Conference.

21. The advancement of women was a dynamic factor with regard to development and the environment. Governments and international organizations concerned with rural development should integrate the role of women into the formulation and implementation of their policies and programmes. The Commission on Sustainable Development should bear in mind the objectives relating to women laid down in Agenda 21 and the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development.

22. The European Union noted with concern that women in particular had been affected by the structural changes in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and were less represented in public office and political life in general. For that reason, the Union was taking account of the specific needs of women in several projects for economic and social development in the region. The situation of women and children in the former Yugoslavia was a cause of great concern for the States members of the European Union, which had strongly condemned the systematic rape of women, particularly Muslim women, in that area. The European Union would see to it that measures were taken to bring the persons responsible to justice.

23. Ms. CAPELING-ALAKIJA (Director, United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)) said that UNIFEM had just completed a joint mission to China with the Division for the Advancement of Women to help the All China Women's Federation prepare for the NGO Forum. The Fund was committed to such collaboration and uniquely positioned to carry it out. UNIFEM was determined to build its capacity to serve as an advocate for women in the developing world and sought to bring a gender perspective to every sphere of development work.

24. Over the past year, UNIFEM had worked hard to narrow the gap between rhetoric and reality. Ever since the Vienna World Conference on Human Rights of

(Ms. Capeling-Alakija)

that connection, UNIFEM had produced a major study documenting the links between domestic and international violence. It was doing everything in its power to hoist gender higher on the geo-political agenda, although it continued to meet with some resistance.

25. Gender was especially important in times of strife; after all, three quarters of the world's 19 million refugees were women and their dependants. Gender must be a front-end consideration in the entire continuum from relief to rehabilitation to reconstruction right through to development. Consistent with the Fund's overall commitment to promoting the strength and visibility of women as leaders and decision-makers both in the United Nations system and in society at large, UNIFEM had signed a memorandum of understanding with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees aimed at improving cooperation and, specifically, at increasing public awareness of the plight of women refugees. UNIFEM was also funding a post in the Department of Humanitarian Affairs to ensure that its policies not only took women's needs fully into account but also gave women a voice in setting those policies.

26. As the world "reinvented" the institutions of global governance that would take it into the twenty-first century, UNIFEM was determined to ensure that women not only had a place on the global agenda but also a voice in setting that agenda. To that end, it had launched programmes in every developing region to help women activists gain the management and negotiating skills they needed to advance. Such programmes included one in Asia that taught negotiating skills to experienced trainers who could then pass them on to a wide range of community-based women's organizations, and in Latin America, UNIFEM was collaborating with institutes in Peru and Brazil to give leaders of grass-roots women's organizations a rigorous programme of gender-sensitive management training. UNIFEM was broadening the scope of its activities from areas that traditionally concerned women, like agriculture and food security, to those that had generally excluded them, such as international trade.

27. She thanked the Fund's leading donors for the significant increase in their support in 1993 and expressed appreciation to developing-country donors for the sacrifice they were making to support UNIFEM.

28. Mr. KONKOBO (Burkina Faso) said that discrimination against women was not only one of the greatest injustices in the world but was also one of the most degrading forms of contempt for women. The time had now come to break with past rhetoric and to adopt national legislation which would actually be implemented. Considerable progress had been achieved by women in developing countries through training programmes, the organization of village women's groups and income-generating activities.

29. The promotion of human rights remained the main prerequisite for the advancement of women. In that connection, Burkina Faso deplored the mass violation of the individual rights of women in certain countries where violence engendered by racism and xenophobia were rife. It also condemned equally discriminatory practices that affected the health of girls, such as excision.

30. In Burkina Faso, the Government had made enormous efforts for the advancement of women, 80 per cent of whom grew up in a rural environment.

(Mr. Konkobo, Burkina Faso)

Sustainable development could not be achieved in Africa unless development took into account women's right to education, democracy and freedom. They must also be guaranteed equal access to justice, because women were those who suffered the most from legislative acts in many parts of the world. Even the most inflexible legislation could be improved.

31. The Fourth World Conference on Women would have a major part to play in helping to remove all obstacles to the advancement of women. His delegation shared the view that preparations at the national level were of crucial importance for the success of the Conference. It was essential to deal at the grass-roots level, in both urban and rural areas, with obstacles to the advancement of women. At the regional level, delegations could evaluate all the solutions put forward in order to identify those which could serve as elements for the platform for action to be adopted by the Conference.

32. Ms. PETERSON (United States of America) noted that in too many places in both the industrialized and developing countries, women faced a lifetime of discrimination, violence and subjugation. The world community was outraged by the abhorrent practice of rape and abuse of women in the former Yugoslavia. She hoped that the United Nations would ensure that the International Tribunal established by Security Council resolution 827 (1993) would fulfil its mandate to prosecute war crimes, including systematic rape, as a tool of "ethnic cleansing".

33. Women's involvement in non-governmental organizations had often led to their participation in local, national and international activities. Member States should welcome and encourage an increase in women's involvement in the political process. In that regard, she supported the recommendations contained in the Secretary-General's report to the Commission on the Status of Women (E/CN.6/1992/10). In the United States, special steps had been taken to encourage the participation of non-governmental organizations in the preparations for the Fourth World Conference on Women.

34. At the June 1993 Vienna World Conference on Human Rights, women's non-governmental organizations had been among the best organized, and their involvement in the Conference had enriched its outcome and led to some of the United Nations finest moments in addressing women's human rights. The Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action had reaffirmed many of the initiatives of the Commission on the Status of Women and the Commission on Human Rights, such as the decision to consider the appointment of a special rapporteur on violence against women, the recommendation that treaty-monitoring bodies should include the status and human rights of women in their deliberations and the adoption of the draft declaration on violence against women.

35. As the international community prepared for the Fourth World Conference on Women, it must not lose sight of the issues to be discussed at the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development and the 1995 World Summit for Social Development. Governments and non-governmental organizations must work together to ensure that women's rights and the participation of women in political and economic life were embedded as cornerstones in the documents that emerged from those conferences.

(Ms. Peterson, United States)

36. The Middle East currently presented a great opportunity for strengthening the role of women in a changing society. A sense of hope had been engendered by the signing of the Declaration of Principles between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization. All efforts in the West Bank and Gaza Strip must include women as participants as well as beneficiaries. A key to economic development in the region was the integration of women into the national economy.

37. While it was crucial to focus on the status of women in various parts of the world, the status of women within the United Nations Secretariat should not be overlooked. No organization could achieve its potential without the full involvement of all its employees. In order to reach the Secretary-General's goal of a 50/50 gender balance in policy positions by 1995, the United Nations must do a much better job of recruiting, nominating and appointing women.

38. Ms. NGUYEN (World Bank) said that the role of women was one of the least understood aspects of development. Political and cultural conditions in many developing countries constrained the extent to which women were involved in the labour force. In most developing countries, women were less educated and often less healthy than men and had a higher incidence of poverty. Recent research suggested that the education of women was directly linked to infant mortality and fertility rates and that maternal mortality was also reduced if women were well informed about sanitation, health and family planning. In short, education benefited society as a whole.

39. The social benefits of educating girls were great enough to cover the costs entailed, even without accounting for market returns. As such, they could represent the highest investment return in today's developing world. Women's economic contribution, however, still fell short of its significant potential as suggested by studies; that contribution, given the virtual dependency on women in poor families, was a key variable in the fight against poverty. Efforts to increase opportunities for women were therefore a matter of developmental efficiency, in that society as a whole benefited. None the less, the argument for making changes favourable to women on the grounds of social justice was equally important. Meanwhile, effective strategies for enhancing women's contribution to key aspects of economic development were now being implemented in various developing countries with support from the World Bank.

40. Concerning its assistance strategy, the World Bank was prepared to organize financial support and technical assistance to ensure that socio-economic data in the developing countries was recorded by gender, the aim being to identify measures which would increase women's participation in development. It could also draw the attention of borrower countries to the socio-economic costs of gender disparities, suggest policy reforms and introduce incentives to its lending with a view to reducing such disparities. At project level, the needs of local populations were more accurately reflected when women participated in designing and managing development policies and programmes, thus leading to greater efficiency and success.

41. In many developing countries, weak institutional capacity was a major obstacle to the implementation of programmes beneficial to women. Donor organizations should therefore assist in strengthening that capacity with a view

(Ms. Nguyen)

to enabling the population to initiate changes aimed at closing the gender gap. In collaboration with United Nations agencies, bilateral donors and non-governmental organizations, the World Bank was helping Governments to identify strategies which would enhance women's contribution to economic development. Non-governmental organizations in particular could provide valuable assistance in project design, implementation, supervision and monitoring, while also benefiting from the Bank's analysis and experience.

42. The Bank was also contributing to preparations for the World Summit on Social Development and the World Conference on Women; by the end of 1994, it would complete a study on analytical issues on gender and effective approaches for enhancing women's contribution to economic development. In addition, it planned to collaborate with United Nations agencies in follow-up programmes in order to keep the debate alive and ensure that recommendations were implemented. She concluded by stressing that little headway could be made in the long-term process of closing the gender gap, producing economic growth and reducing poverty without cooperation from Governments, who were ultimately responsible for widening opportunities for women and thus improving socio-economic conditions in the developing world.

43. Mrs. KABA-CAMARA (Côte d'Ivoire) said that discrimination against women, which had the same consequences as racial and religious discrimination, was not always fought with the same vigour; despite safeguards provided under international instruments and internal legislation, women's rights were frequently flouted. The underlying causes and manifestations of sexual inequality should be thoroughly explored. Her delegation therefore hoped that such issues would be pursued at the World Conference on Women in the search for ways of eliminating that inequality.

44. The advancement of women and their integration in development would be achieved only if they enjoyed equal opportunities with men. As an important factor in sustainable development, women had a substantial socio-economic contribution to make. Their work, often unpaid, should be recognized and their power should match their responsibilities. Statistics on women and development were an imperative requirement, particularly in Africa, where women were further impoverished by the chronic economic situation. Her delegation commended the work of INSTRAW and UNIFEM in that connection.

45. Sustainable development would likewise only be accomplished with the contribution of women, who should be encouraged to participate in formulating and implementing appropriate policies and programmes. Demographic policies were similarly doomed to failure without the participation of women; family planning, child health and nutrition, infant mortality and fertility rates were inextricably linked to their education. In addition, women could make a considerable contribution to both the International Conference on Population and Development and the World Summit on Social Development, and should also be appointed to decision-making positions at regional, national and international levels, thus enabling their views to be heard. Her delegation encouraged the United Nations to pursue its policy of improving the status of women in the Secretariat, always taking due account of equitable geographical distribution and linguistic balance.

(Mrs. Kaba-Camara, Côte d'Ivoire)

46. Women were the first victims of regional conflicts and constituted the majority of refugees and displaced persons. They should therefore be protected against all forms of violence, which the international community should severely reprimand. They should also play a greater role in peacemaking, peace-keeping and preventive diplomacy, as their sensitivity and approach to problems could lend new direction to the quest for lasting solutions to regional conflicts. They merely needed to be given the opportunity to participate fully in the life of the nation on an equal footing with men.

47. Mr. KUBBA (Iraq) said that the successful promotion of women's rights in his country had been seriously affected by the embargo imposed following the aggression against Iraq in 1991. Iraqi women, who as mothers and housewives already shouldered extra burdens, had suffered most from that embargo; repairs to the country's infrastructure, which had been largely destroyed in the war, were impossible and inflation was rampant. Women had borne the greater brunt of the resulting rise in unemployment and diminished job opportunities.

48. Coupled with the ban on sales of Iraqi oil and the freezing of Iraqi assets abroad, the effect of the embargo had been to reduce imports of essential items, meaning that women were experiencing great difficulty in providing for their families. They also suffered in pregnancy and labour owing to the shortage of medicines, while documented studies had attributed the birth of unhealthy infants to weapons used by the coalition forces in the war against Iraq, including depleted uranium rounds. Iraq was hopeful that international organizations, particularly the United Nations, would take steps to halt the continued violation of its most basic rights in order to ensure that it led a life of peace and prosperity.

49. Mrs. MBELLA (Cameroon) said that the path to development was hampered by a blurred and unequal vision of human potential and by the social, economic and environmental conditions which fed that vision. The contribution of men and women to development should be recognized, together with their latent strengths and capabilities. Her delegation endorsed a shift to gender awareness and efforts by United Nations agencies to place gender in the mainstream of all development programmes. The goal of integrating women into that process included their attainment of economic and social equality through the global eradication of poverty, access to health, education, land and other resources and access to peaceful control of their own destiny, and that of their communities, in an environment where development was sustained.

50. Her Government's commitment to those ideals was illustrated by its ratification in 1992 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Referring to the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, she also endorsed the full and equal participation of women in all aspects of life at all levels and the eradication of all sex discrimination. She equally supported the full participation of women as both agents and beneficiaries of development and the importance of system-wide cooperation between the various United Nations bodies concerned with women's programmes.

51. Her Government further welcomed the decision of the Commission on Human Rights to consider appointing a special rapporteur on violence against women, and hoped that that term would be defined in a manner which encompassed all

(Mrs. Mbella, Cameroon)

forms of violence to which women were subjected. It also subscribed to the recommendations of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action which urged the United Nations to allow women a greater role in decision-making. In that connection, the commitment of the Secretary-General to attain an equal ratio between women and men in senior positions in the Secretariat by 1995 was encouraging.

52. Concerning the Fourth World Conference on Women, her delegation anticipated that the move towards action for equality, development and peace would lead to the adoption of a feasible strategy that met the primary concerns of women, which, in her own country, were wide-ranging. In terms of preparations for the Conference, her Government had already established a national coordinating committee for that purpose. With a view to mobilizing wider input to the preparations, her delegation concurred with the need to consider the full participation of non-governmental organizations, with special consideration being given to those without consultative status. Her delegation was willing to assist in reaching a solution on that matter during the current session. Lastly, she believed that adequate resources should be allocated to preparing regional meetings and enabling the participation of developing countries with a view to achieving an equitable input from all regions in the deliberations of the Conference.

The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.